

Make 'n Take



Name of Make 'n Take: Parfleche Bag

Theme and Topic: The Treaty Relationship Today – A Vision for the Future

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Name of School/School Division: Charlebois School, Cumberland House, Northern Lights School Division113

Grade: Grade 6 - 12

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Materials:

Blank graph paper Original items or pictures of Cree, Saulteaux –Ojibway, Dene, Nakota/Dakota/Lakota beadwork designs – specifically a parfleche bag. brown/beige roll paper, scissors, crayons/markers/glitter. Glue, string, beads.

Beadwork designs from Saskatchewan First Nations (Cree, Dene, Saulteaux-Ojibway, Nakota/Dakota /Lakota)

Procedure

1. Have the students name the tribes of First Nations people living in Saskatchewan. Discuss the traditional arts and beadwork designs they have seen on various items e.g. moccasins, jackets, purses, key chains, mukluks, star blankets, jewellery, etc... Talk about the type of designs each tribe is noted for (geometric, flowers, shapes,). Talk about the colors used in each design.

2. Invite a First Nation's artist to the classroom who makes moccasins, art, jewellery, etc... to the class to talk about the designs s/he uses in his/her art work or crafts. Ask the guest to talk about the colors in their work and if they have special meanings.
3. Have the students work in groups to study one of the First Nation tribal designs. Ask them to look at the type of design and colors used. What is unique about the designs? What subject area knowledge they have to know to make a similar design (Math, visual art design, etc...)? Are there other characteristics they noticed?
4. Have the student make a parfleche bag. They are to create their own design to paint, bead, colour on their parfleche bag. The design must be from the tribe they studied. They will have to explain why how they came up with the design and how it would be recognized Cree, Saulteaux-Ojibway, Dene, Nakota/Dakota/Lakota.
5. Explain to the students that a parfleche was used to wrap and transport meat from hunting grounds to home. It was eventually adapted for personal use. People began to decorate and use when they were travelling. Each culture would decorate using their own designs that would represent their specific culture. They would also have opportunity to show their artistic talents.

Steps in making the parfleche design.

6. Each group will decide the size of their parfleche and cut the length from the paper roll. The paper will represent deer or moose hide.
7. Fold the paper in three parts length wise folding towards the centre. Turn and fold in three parts again width wise. Have students decide how they will tie the parfleche so that items put into it will not fall out.
8. Next the students will decorate their designs on the front and/or back of the parfleche
9. Before they begin ask the students why it is important for First Nations people to retain their art and crafts in present day. Talk about identity, belonging, self confidence, traditional teachings, cultural teachings, beliefs and values. Talk about how First Nations people are going back to their languages, cultural and traditional teachings, spiritual ceremonies and history. Finally discuss the importance for all students to realize that First Nations peoples have had their languages and cultures suppressed through various government assimilation initiatives which negatively impacted First Nations people. Today, they are going back to their languages and cultures which have positive influences on their lives. It has renewed the pride in their unique heritage. This lesson creates an image of First Nations people today; full of pride, dignity and respect.